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RETENTION OF THE PLACENTA.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I am induced to send you the report of the two following cases of Retained Placenta—the first, on account of the benefit derived from the tart. antimon. ; the other, by reason of their being reports in circulation, that the retention of the *after-birth* was owing to my carelessness, and that the death was a necessary consequence of the retained placenta. These reports originated in the ignorance of the attendants on the patient, and have been encouraged by the less excusable maliciousness of some individuals, whose *nominal standing* in society ought to have placed them beyond the influence of such contemptible temptation to “gnash their teeth and spit their spite”; but “*malignitas Tartarum fit et ad Diabolum hominem appropinquat*”; and while the members of the medical profession have to bear a double portion of the venom of slander, it is some consolation to believe that the poison generally proceeds from ignorance, excepting in those cases where intelligence is only given to make the darkness of a character more horribly visible.

CASE I.—In the month of Nov. last, Mrs. B., of this city, was delivered after six or eight hours' severe labor. When attempting to extract the placenta, I found as complete an hour-glass contraction as perhaps ever took place; the aperture through the strictured part was not large enough to admit my finger, without using such violence as produced extreme suffering to the patient; and during the twelve hours succeeding the birth of the child, although I made frequent examinations, I found no relaxation of stricture. At the end of this period, I gave her frequent doses of a weak solution of antimon. tart. until nausea was produced; and I then was able to introduce my hand up to the *fundus uteri*, where the placenta was lodged, and removed it with apparent ease. Her recovery was attended with as little trouble as could be expected after so severe a labor.

CASE II.—January, 1836, was called to Mrs. H., of this city, a young and delicate woman. Understood from her friends, that she was from five to six months advanced in pregnancy, and that she was then threatened with an abortion. About half an hour after my entering the house, she gave birth to twin fetuses; one was wrapped in its membranes, which came away entire. After separating the other from the cord, I attempted to introduce my hand to deliver the placenta, but found great difficulty on account of the straitness of the vaginal passage. Upon pulling gently at the cord, it gave way, apparently at its attachment to

the placenta. During this time, the patient complained of great faintness, and she was seemingly in a state of extreme exhaustion—her sufferings had been comparatively little—the hemorrhage not so profuse as generally takes place in like circumstances. I left her to call on one or two patients in the neighborhood, that required my attention, directing the attendants not to disturb her by noise or company, and to use gentle friction to the abdomen, as well as to give her frequently small quantities of wine and gruel. About an hour afterwards, and previous to my finishing my professional business that I left her to attend to, I was requested, by her husband, to visit her again. I found her still faint, but no hemorrhage of consequence had occurred. I again attempted to reach the placenta, but found it impossible, both on account of the difficulty previously mentioned, and the unwillingness of the patient to submit, as well as the discouraging conduct of the attendants; and as I did not see any danger in delay, but much in pursuing any measure which would increase the great exhaustion of the patient, I desisted from any further attempts. A few hours afterwards I called again, and finding that there had been no propulsive action of the uterus, I gave her a small dose of an infusion of ergot, and repeated it during my stay at that time—but without effect. I will add, that during all this time, instead of the room being kept dark and quiet, as well as supporting the spirits of the patient by encouraging assurances, it was sometimes crowded, and discouraging conversation was kept up regarding the patient. I again repeated my directions, and left the patient for the night. Early in the morning, I visited her, and found her more exhausted, and having appearances of approaching dissolution. Knowing that her death would be imputed to the retained placenta, by her friends, who were generally *ignorant* people, I felt anxious, if possible, to extract it before she died. I examined with my finger, and thought I felt it at the upper part of the vagina; and believing I could introduce the blunt-hook easier than my hand, I used it, but found what I considered to be the *after-birth*, nothing but a small coagula of blood. I then endeavored, myself, to arouse the dormant energy of the system, by camphor, ammonia, wine, &c.; but all my exertions proved fruitless, as she sank, and died while I remained in the house.

Now what was the cause of the patient's death? I apprehend it must have been produced only by three causes, viz. 1, exhaustion by loss of blood; 2, exhaustion by irritation by the placenta; 3, expenditure of nervous power. That it was not caused by hemorrhage, can be proved to a demonstration; for there was not, during her whole illness, sufficient to have produced the least alarm; and that there was not any internal hemorrhage, can be almost equally as well proved, for the abdomen remained perfectly flaccid, and free from fulness to her last moments.

From the short time between her labor and her death, it will be obvious, to any person acquainted with the economy of the human system, that the irritation of the placenta must have been altogether of a mechanical nature, which was never so much as even to produce the slightest degree of uterine contraction. But that death was produced by general nervous exhaustion, commencing before labor, but undoubtedly kept up and aggravated by the distress of labor and the succeeding excitement, I

verily believe. My reasons for this conclusion, are, the delicate state of the patient's health before her confinement—the fact that the labor might be termed *passive*, as the contents of the uterus *slid out of it*, seemingly more by the force of their own gravity than by any active effort of the uterus, and that the force of the circulation was feeble, indicating great debility before her confinement, and never after was there the least symptom of a re-action, although a variety of powerful stimulants were constantly prescribed.

You will excuse the wearisome minuteness and prolixity of the foregoing report, as I wished to exhibit the case in such a light that the most ignorant might not misunderstand, and the most malicious could not misconstrue.

McR.

Bangor, Me. March 23, 1836.

DIETETICS.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

DEAR SIR,—The subject of diet is now fully before the American medical public, through your columns, and I heartily rejoice that it is. It is high time that this matter should be taken up and examined by *medical* men; and you have done wisely, as I conceive, in lending your pages to the investigation. Just look at the circumstances. A prize has been held out. It has been won, and ably won. The ground assumed in the dissertation has called up in opposition the talents of a man who has been twenty years investigating this very subject, and who, enthusiastic, and even ultra as he may be, must be acknowledged to bring to the arena of debate equipments of no ordinary character. I have the misfortune to be an utter stranger both to him and Dr. Bell: and, although there does appear to me something rather vamping in the style of Mr. Graham, yet I must be permitted to utter the belief that Dr. Bell stands a fair chance of being thrown into a very awkward and mortifying attitude before the public, in the course of this discussion, by his professed disdain of "game" that was not far higher than Mr. Graham.

I say not this to inflame either side of the question. Dr. Bell has received the honor and the avails of a prize; and I hope, as one of your readers, that he will not withhold his able assistance till this subject is thoroughly examined. I would not be the judge for the mass of your readers: but when a subject is fairly before the public and their attention excited, then is the time to settle it and "lay it upon the shelf." It has been an interesting inquiry to me for years, whether eating meat once or twice daily is an injury to the people of these United States; and I beg the pardon of Dr. Bell and Mr. Graham, and all who have lately contributed, for saying that I am yet undecided whether a man will not be just about as healthy whether he lives on a plain mixed diet or one exclusively vegetable.

Now, Mr. Editor, I will tell you what kind of evidence I want, and possibly many other of your readers, to come to a settled conclusion. I humbly solicit of the gentlemen who have been, or may be, engaged in

this inquiry now going on in your paper, to give us facts relating to an *exclusively* vegetable diet. We can all select a number of families who live in a plain way on mixed diet, and form an opinion of their actual health. Let us have, in your paper, a candid statement of families or individuals who have adopted the vegetable diet. If this mode of living has ruined many, it is certainly in the power of the medical faculty to prove it. But, sir, let us have no reports that do not come over a responsible name. The name and residence of the persons reported should be known. There can be no objection to this. It is the only way in which we can come at truth. If there be any mis-statement, there is then a chance that it will be rectified. We have had three or four cases by F. P. F. (in the 3d number of this volume), of insanity produced by Grahamism. But who is F. P. F.? Who are the victims? Where did they live? Who can contradict his statements if they contain errors? Did F. P. F. hear of no other cases of insanity than those of the said Grahamites?

But are such papers as that of F. P. F. to be filed and laid up as matters of science? Does it bear the impress of candid and impartial investigation, as if he was aiming solely at the elimination of truth? I make these interrogatories, not to taunt F. P. F. Far from it. I very much want those cases in a shape in which they can be trusted and referred to on the principles of medical evidence. Such cases, with names, places, dates, are what I have been long looking for. I have heard of sad shipwrecks from vegetable diet. But where are they? Will not your contributors come forward with plain statements, in the elevated attitude of philosophers—truth-seekers—bringing no symbols of party or of passion—no taunts—no allusions to the merits or demerits of men—and confer on themselves and your Journal the honor of a full and convincing array of facts and reasonings on this deeply interesting and practical subject?

Hartford, March 14, 1836.

M. L. NORTH.

CANCER.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—I have wished, for a considerable time, to make some suggestions concerning Cancer, but have hitherto been delayed, from several contingent circumstances. I make no pretensions to anything new upon the subject; all I desire is, to call the attention of our profession more particularly to this disease.

Carcinomatous patients, by regular practitioners, are frequently treated with very little ceremony, upon their first application. The physician often tells them, this tumor does not trouble you much now, and it may never disturb you. I think, therefore, you had better make your mind easy, and do little or nothing to it. He gets rid of the case, perhaps, by prescribing some placebo. The operative surgeon usually prescribes the knife, which, in the early stage, has such terrors to most persons, that they are apt to dismiss themselves, without further advice. Any efficient process is thus liable to be deferred, till the complaint becomes intolera-

ble. In this stage recourse is usually had to the quack, since people in distress must have some consolation, and will even rely upon a broken reed, though it affords no real support.

The truth is, that cancer, or almost any affection that in time is liable to become cancerous, is as easily and surely cured, when taken in season, and properly and perseveringly treated, as almost any other severe disease. There is no surer way to fail in any disease, than to begin by imagining it to be incurable. No efficient course is ever recommended, or perseveringly pursued, in such cases.

The scurvy affection, that appears usually on the nose or face, which sometimes continues through life with very little inconvenience, and at others degenerates into a phagedenic ulcer, commonly called *noli me tangere*, is pretty surely removed in the beginning, and even after it is considerably advanced, by wetting it several times a day with Fowler's mineral solution. An arsenical cerate answers the same purpose, and was successfully employed by the late professor Nathan Smith. The late Dr. Cogswell probably was as successful, in the application of a paste made of corrosive sublimate and moistened crumb of bread. In most of these cases, the system rarely sympathizes with the topical affection, till after the ulcer is deep-seated and extensively diffused; internal remedies are consequently unnecessary, in the early stage.

I apprehend, however, that it is very different with the true scirrhus, or tumors likely to degenerate into scirrhus and finally to become open ulcers of the malignant kind. Their more general return after extirpation by the knife, and their usual though not quite so common re-appearance, after removal by caustic, confirm the idea that they are frequently only symptomatic of a peculiar state of the system. Many of the tumors in the female breast are symptomatic of a primary affection in the uterus.

It is hence obvious, that our principal dependence in scirrhus must be on internal means, and that extirpation, when practised—which, however, in nine cases out of ten, as late as it is usually employed, is perhaps better omitted—ought to be reckoned only among the external auxiliaries. The most successful of all the internal remedies, generally employed, is unquestionably *an efficient, regular, and persevering course of conium and iron*, in quantities *as large as the brain and stomach will bear*. A course of tonics, deobstruents, and narcotics, combined, will do almost everything short of working miracles. Iodine alone frequently has a very fine effect, but it is often best employed as an auxiliary. Some species of the dock, and of other vegetable deobstruents, are also good adjuvants. The system cannot be cleared of the carcinomatous diathesis, except in some such way. Arsenic and corrosive sublimate—more particularly as external applications to open ulcers—are sometimes very useful. But, as I am only making suggestions, and not writing a treatise, I shall not attempt specifications, either for internal or external remedies.

As a very general rule, the system is in an atonic state, and the strength must be supported by a nutritious diet, with metallic and vegetable tonics, and the irritation must be kept under by narcotics. I shall only add, that the few practitioners who have followed a regular plan, similar

to the preceding, have had their efforts frequently crowned with unexpected success. I could mention recoveries from apparently desperate cases, which have been so palpable, that they seemed to prove too much, the idea of the certain fatality of cancer being so strongly riveted, that neither patients nor friends could realize the preceding danger, and they imagined that a mild disease had been mistaken for cancer.

You will please to recollect, that all I wish in this essay is to promote inquiry, and to attract the attention of practitioners to a disease, which, in my opinion, is unjustly considered as an *opprobrium medicorum*.

March 22, 1836.

SENEX.

A POST-MORTEM EXAMINATION.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—In the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal of Feb. 24th, I find published an obscure case of post-mortem examination, during which I was present; and were I able to throw more light upon the subject than the dissection disclosed, I would do it with pleasure. I saw the woman who was the subject of examination, as she passed through this village, the evening previous to her arrival at Mendon, at the hotel in this place, where she spent the night, in consequence of not being able to proceed on her journey. She then complained of soreness and tenderness of the abdomen, attended with uterine hemorrhage. The next morning she was no better; took the stage and proceeded as far as Mendon, where Dr. Wilder was called upon, and attended her until her decease, which took place in seven days from the time he first saw her. I did not see her from the time she left Woonsocket until a few minutes before her dissolution, being at that time called in consultation.

At the time I first saw her, I supposed her to be laboring under visceral inflammation. I advised her to discontinue her journey, and place herself under the care of a physician, which she accordingly did that day. She had travelled between one and two hundred miles in the stage; the weather was cold, and her clothing appeared to be rather thin. She was a widow, and had one child, several years of age. In answer to the questions whether she had been pregnant recently, or not, those of the profession who have read the report of the case are equally well qualified to answer as myself.

Many of the appearances on dissection would lead us to suppose that abortion had taken place; yet notwithstanding, all those symptoms might exist without the existence of pregnancy. Dr. Wilder informs me that abortion did not take place while under his care, or to his knowledge, and that no evidence of anything of the kind had been manifested to him; it might have taken place previous to her arrival here.

Respectfully yours,

HIRAM ALLEN.

Woonsocket, R. I. March 23, 1836.

To the Editor of the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.

SIR,—The enclosed sheet was picked up with a bundle of other papers of no consequence. As no owner could be found, and not knowing exactly what to make of it, or to whom it was directed, it was shown to a medical friend, who advised me to send it to you, stating that *you* would be likely to understand it, and might, perhaps, turn it to some useful account.

KAPPA.

March 26th, 1836.

GRAHAMISM VINDICATED.

Falstaff.—"I am a rogue, if I were not at half-sword with a dozen of them two hours together. I have 'scap'd by miracle. I am eight times thrust through the doublet; four, through the hose; my buckler cut through and through."

Poins.—"Pray God, you have not murdered some of them."

Fal.—"Nay, that's past praying for: for I have peppered two of them: two, I am sure, I have paid; two rogues in buckram suits."

MR. EDITOR,—The interest that Mr. Graham's discoveries have excited among some of your readers, of late, induced me, the other day, to turn back to the extract from his lecture on the vitality of the blood (for I confess it was passed over rather hastily, by me, at the time), for the purpose of looking again, lest I might not have penetrated the *marrow* of his "severe scientific researches" into the occult philosophy of that vital fluid. When I had carefully re-perused the article, it was my "misfortune" not to be quite sure in what Mr. G.'s notions, that were so urgently recommended to the consideration of medical men, consisted; and I took up Copland's Dictionary which lay upon my table, thinking, as that is a late work of some repute, it would indicate to me the state of the science of the blood, up to the time of Mr. G.'s discoveries, when I could easily draw the line between the *old* and the *new* "notions." Turning to the article on the blood, you may judge of my utter surprise and astonishment, Mr. Editor, to learn that some unlucky wind had blown Mr. Graham's "notions" upon the vitality of the blood across the Atlantic, and that Dr. Copland had the discoveries of Mr. G. all written out and fully explained in his Dictionary; and, what is most provoking, sir, the Doctor, probably knowing Mr. G.'s aversion to "*dictionaries and cyclopaedias*," has not even named him as a "benefactor" to the science of vitality!! Most unpardonable plagiarism! and "rank dishonesty"!

Upon the proximate principles of the blood, Dr. Copland has sent us back a complete fac simile of Mr. Graham's "notions," bating the *soap bubbles* which Mr. G. has "*blurted*" into his lecture by way of giving a portly expansibility. These, no doubt, all burst and were lost in crossing the ocean. It is too bad, Mr. Editor, for the Doctor, after availing himself of the "*severe scientific researches and twenty years' experience*" of so distinguished a philosopher, to treat him with such marked neglect, and then attempt to gull his readers by the authority of such *superficial* "*smatterers*" as Sir E. Home, MM. Dumas and Andral, and Professor Schultz. It is absolutely unpardonable! And then, to mystify the matter still further, he adds to Mr. G.'s "notions" all that vulgar trash about the ultimate principles of the blood, conjured out of the "*black art*" of chemistry, by such blue lights as Le Cann, Berzelius and Marcet.

"But this is obviously an expedient to cover human ignorance with the guise of science, a purely hypothetical attempt, &c."

But why all this hawking and connivance to conceal the true prince, the "heir apparent" of these great discoveries? Ah! there's the rub! Is it not already apparent that Dr. C. is "*prejudiced and dishonest*"? that he belongs to the antiquated and exploded school of *flesh-eaters*—"God save the mark"—I had almost said cannibals? I'll engage, sir, you will yet see him stuffing his readers with "*grave trifling, in the form of scientific reasoning from Baron Cuvier*," and "the trash of Mr. Lawrence, &c. &c." both mere pigmies in "the science of human life" compared with MR. S. GRAHAM!

I was about to say a word upon the "raving" of that naughty varlet, W*. W*, for his unpardonable credulity in asserting that tea and coffee, "to the mass of mankind, are a most agreeable and salutary stimulus," and for his officious meddling with theories of which he is ignorant, and that do not concern him. But I bethink me it is all unnecessary. Mr. Graham's Sancho Panza, R. has done the job for him; has hurled at him such a volley of scorching epithets, as would batter any *man of flesh* to a jelly. I doubt, sir, if there be anything of him left. Why, indeed, it is already demonstrated, that ninety-nine "*in a hundred even of members of the medical profession*," are nothing but "*prejudiced*" ignoramuses and "*dishonest*" knaves. "*Call you that backing of your friends? A plague of such backing!*" What! make such "statements as he does concerning tea and coffee, in the very face of the most complete scientific demonstrations made by a number of distinguished professional gentlemen of Europe!" But why go abroad for demonstrations? the thing is preposterous, when we have them at home! Will "*ignorance and dishonesty*" attempt to gainsay the "*severe scientific researches*" and philosophical "*instructions*" of the late celebrated and peerless DOCTOR SYLVAN, alias RAINWATER, "*concerning the dietetical abstinence, &c.*"? He has settled the point as to the poisonous nature of coffee. *Ecce signum!* It is, however, but justice to say, our erudite author admits that "*souchong tea may be used, but not strong*."

"But with respect to the charcoal bean ones, as none of the minute analyzers, after their having sustained the torrefying process, have published the result of their sedulous aualization, and consequently inform of the eminent principles and precious qualities existing in the parched celebrated grains, by this notorious, and which might be said political deficiency, we are obliged to make no distinction between the reverated roasted grains, and the essential ingredient which is indispensably employed as a third principle, compounding the powder of fulmination, and consequently containing no other known properties, but the one serving to the fulminant powder composition, calculated for the benign purpose of launching at a distance incendiary death, and effectual combustion. Such are the predominant qualities that one is obliged to infer that can diffuse into the human body the charcoal drink seed assimilation; notwithstanding the refined emphatical logic of the black liquor exultation, and the one of its most illustrious patron and promoter; and all those superfluous qualities intelligibly enumerated by the venerable and corporeal

repairer, methodical wise, are solely due to the ignifying element, and the renowned charcoal beans assimilation, by the plausible reason, that the sapientipotent physical trisnegistus, notwithstanding his unexemplified idolization for the Arabian vegetative production, the consistent patron authentically acknowledged the grains of the berry to be most notorious for their offensive and poisonous nature."

Will any presume to gainsay such logic? None but "prejudiced men and smatterers." Will any one ask for other demonstration? I would not give him other, if demonstrations were as plenty as blackberries.

P. S. The extraordinary coincidence in sentiment, language, mode of reasoning and conclusions in regard to dietetics, and particularly the poisonous nature of coffee, between Mr. Graham and the renowned DOCTOR SYLVAN, alias RAINWATER, is one of those surprising cases, of which there is an occasional instance in the history of individuals in other countries, distinguished for originality of genius.

A querist whispers in my ear a doubt, whether S. GRAHAM might not have been the pupil of DOCTOR SYLVAN, as he must have commenced his "twenty years" of severe physiological and psychological researches about the *period* and near the *place* wherein the "*sapientipotent*" RAINWATER flourished in his most resplendent glory. Perhaps, Mr. Editor, you can inform your readers as to the fact. Possibly, suggests my querist, Mr. Graham may be appropriating to his own behoof the labors and discoveries which belong to his most illustrious *prototype*, "*patron and promoter*," and which were bequeathed to the public in the inimitable treatise on "*the dietical abstinence*" about twenty-four years since. Was not S. GRAHAM pupil and heir of the RAINWATER glory?

ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

[Communicated for the Boston Medical and Surgical Journal.]

THOSE who attended my last lecture in this city, on Animal Magnetism, will recollect that in finishing, I pronounced the following words:—"These facts (the magnetical phenomena) have been produced, and are every day repeated, in almost every part of continental Europe. I have seen them also produced, and in a manner still more surprising, in the French West Indies. They have been witnessed and confirmed by men of the highest rank and merit. Therefore, from analogy, I say, and positively affirm, that they ought to be produced in this country, and they certainly shall be produced one day or other, by making proper experiments; for, those facts are but the natural consequence of certain faculties of human organization. Now human organization is pretty nearly the same everywhere, and absolutely the same under the same latitude. If the magnetical phenomena have manifested themselves in Germany, Prussia, France, &c. they undoubtedly will be manifested in the United States of America, and soon we shall see that important truth as fairly demonstrated here as it is now in Europe."

I am happy, Mr. Editor, to announce to the medical public, that my assertions are now fully confirmed, and prove, by indisputable facts, to

have been founded on a right reasoning. The magnetical phenomena, since I have finished lecturing on this subject, have been exhibited many times in several individuals; they have been witnessed by respectable persons, and although the effects produced were not yet very striking and convincing, still none of those who witnessed them could help acknowledging that there is, *as they say*, "*something true in magnetism.*" But, I announce to the public that these phenomena may be now exhibited in such a degree of evidence as to oblige the most sceptical to exclaim, "*it is true, I believe.*" The following case will explain what I mean.

I was called on the 20th of this month, to a lady, Mrs. R——, living at No. 54 Belknap Street, who wished to have magnetism tried upon her. Mrs. R—— is a woman 52 years of age, of a lymphatic temperament, nervous, with a strong predominance of the nervous system. She told me she was affected four or five years since with the *tic douloureux* in her back, and a rheumatic complaint, which occupied all the inferior part of the trunk, that is, the two hips, the lower part of the vertebral column, and the adjacent muscles. These affections were complicated with a chronic complaint of the liver. Several physicians had attended her, and drugs were not spared; but all was in vain. Mrs. R—— suffered more and more, and for several days previous to my visit, was confined to her chamber. She had not slept a wink for two nights. When I entered her room, I found her on a rocking chair, in the most excruciating pains. She had almost continual spasmodic fits, which ran from the inferior part of the spinal marrow and the lower part of the abdomen up to the stomach, the diaphragm and the region of the heart, and kept her in the greatest state of distress. Mrs. L——, her friend, who was present, confirmed everything said by her, and added, that she, Mrs. R——, had been unable to stir and go down for three days.

After examination, I thought the case a proper one for the application of magnetism. Being not able myself to magnetize, owing to a weakened and disordered nervous system, I brought with me, to Mrs. R——'s room, a countryman of mine, M. Bugard, a teacher of the French language in this city, who is enjoying a full health, and to whom I had communicated the knowledge of the magnetical process. M. B. had already practised upon me two or three times. I had felt his action, and judged from that he would be a good magnetizer. I might say here, before going any further, that Mrs. R—— and her friends were utterly ignorant of animal magnetism, even of the meaning of the word, and I have constantly kept them since in the same ignorance about it.

Mrs. R—— has been magnetized six times, on the 20th, 22d, 24th, 26th, 27th, and 29th inst. As I intend giving a lecture soon upon animal magnetism, in which I shall relate all the particulars in regard to those various sittings, I will content myself with mentioning here, in general terms, the most important phenomena. At the first course of operation, the patient slept two hours, and felt sensibly relieved by it. At the second operation, she slept all the night, viz. from 10 o'clock in the evening until 7 or 8 the next day. She began to be so well, that she was able to go down and attend to her housework. She said that she felt especially relieved from her palpitations of heart. (I was not yet

aware of the existence of that other complaint in her.) At the third sitting, she showed the first symptoms of somnambulism. She could hear perfectly well, and answered by monosyllables, in a low voice. In the fourth and fifth sittings, she manifested a very remarkable degree of somnambulism. The chief phenomena we observed in these two last courses of operation were the following. 1st.—The patient could hear nobody else but the magnetizer, to whom she answered, even when he spoke to her in a low voice. 2d.—The insensibility of the external senses. The somnambule remained insensible to the severest trial exercised upon her; such as pinching her feet and hands, puncturing her skin with a pin, blowing the smoke of tobacco into her nose, burning bits of candle-paper under her nose, speaking loud to her, clapping our hands before her ear, shaking her arms and legs, and she did not stir a single time. 3d.—The complete forgetfulness, when awaked, of what she had said, and what was told or happened to be heard during her sleep. She already felt so well, that she spoke of setting out on a journey to Beverly, near Salem, on particular business.

I now arrive at this morning's sitting (29th inst.). I will particularly describe what took place in that sitting, for it was intended to be a scientific examination of the case, by some respectable medical gentlemen of this city. This examination, I say by the way, we had deferred until this moment—wishing to have the patient thoroughly under the magnetical influence, before showing her to any person whatever. Judging, then, that it was time to have such an examination made, we invited Drs. Winslow Lewis, G. B. Doane, Samuel G. Howe, J. V. C. Smith, and H. Kimball, to resort to the patient's house at about 10 o'clock in the forenoon. Of the five gentlemen above mentioned, two could not come, being detained elsewhere by some previous engagement. We found the patient already prepared and waiting for us in her apartment. Being asked how she felt, she answered, pretty nicely. Dr. Lewis asked her several questions concerning her complaints, and the treatment she had been following. Both from her answers and her whole appearance, it was evident that Mrs. R—— was a plain, sincere, and candid woman, knowing nothing of magnetism, except the good she had already received from it. We asked her whether she had slept well last night: she answered she had slept but very little. Before commencing the operation, Dr. Lewis touched her pulse—it was 96 a minute. The operator commenced at twenty-five minutes past 10; in the course of twenty minutes she appeared very drowsy; sighed several times, coughed a little; we noticed some slight motions of the muscles of the face. Finally she closed her eyelids, at ten minutes before 11. The operation had been disturbed two or three times by the coming in and going out of several persons, and also by an almost continual noise in the street and on the stairs of the house. At this moment Dr. Doane was introduced into the apartment. Drs. Lewis and Kimball touched her pulse, and found that the number of pulsations had come down to 76, 20 less than when the operation commenced. Mons. Bugard asked her several questions about her present feeling, and the state of her health—she answered in a low voice, but very distinctly to the surrounding persons. Drs. Lewis,

Doane and Kimball asked her also several questions, but received no answer. The patient being not in relation with them, could not hear what they said. M. Bugard asked her whether she liked the smell of tobacco. She answered that she could not bear it; that tobacco made her very sick. Then Dr. Doane, at my invitation, said to her, in a loud voice, "Mrs. R—, M. Poyen is going to burn a cigar under your nose;" but the patient did not stir—she had not heard. I lighted up a cigar, filled my mouth with smoke, and blew it into her nose. I also held the cigar, while smoking, before her face—she felt nothing. I clapped my hands twice, and Dr. Kimball moved with much noise a piece of furniture behind her head. We kept talking and moving about her, but she remained quietly sleeping, nothing disturbed her. But Dr. Kimball having clapped his hands twice at her ear, she moved her head and complained a little, as a person struck by a sudden and unexpected noise. The magnetizer asked her what it was. She answered, "a crack-er." In the meanwhile I put a bit of blazing paper under her nose; but we noticed that she breathed the smoke, and yet did not stir. The magnetizer passed his hands before her face, with a strong intention to calm her and keep on the state of somnambulism; she exclaimed—"Oh! what a light!" M. B. "A light?" "Yes, a light; it dazzles me." M. B. "How does that light shine?" "Like the sun." M. B. "Do you see it still?" "Yes, before my face." We were all in amazement, and I particularly was struck with the coincidence of that phenomenon, manifested in this country, in a person quite ignorant of magnetism, with what had been observed in the somnambules of Europe. M. B. carried his hand down to the abdomen. "Do you see now that light?" "No, it is gone." M. B. brought again his hand before the face. The somnambule exclaimed, "here it is again." M. B. "How do you like it?" "I don't like it, it dazzles me." M. B. "Do you see my hand?" "No." "Do you feel it?" "Yes, very well." "How do you feel it?" "Warm, very warm." M. B. then takes his hand away, and the somnambule says again, "The light is gone." Dr. Lewis speaks to her, but obtains no answer. The magnetizer takes Dr. Lewis's hand and puts it in the somnambule's—with a *desire* that she may hear and answer him. Dr. Lewis spoke again to her, and she soon answered him, but rather low. Dr. Kimball placed a silver pencil case upon her face, but she felt nothing. Then holding it at about three or four inches distant from her eyes, M. B. asked her whether she sees something? She answers, "yes." "What is it?" "A piece of silver,"—and her eyes were perfectly closed. But here is a phenomenon still more surprising. I suggested to the magnetizer the idea of convulsing a limb by directing his fingers, at several inches distant, towards that limb. The somnambule could not by any means understand what I said, for I spoke to M. B. in French. Agreeably to my suggestion, M. B. stretched his two fingers towards the right hand, at about two or three inches distant, and immediately the limb was seized with convulsive motions, slight at first, but increasing with such an intensity that the patient could not keep her arm in place. Drs. Lewis and Kimball tried the same experiment, but unsuccessfully. I directed my two fingers towards the same hand, and

it was set to convulsions. Dr. Doane tried after me, and appeared to produce also some effect. A few minutes after, Dr. Lewis, in order to prevent all deception, put a book before the patient's eyes, and told me, *by signs*, to convulse the hand. I directed my fingers, and the whole arm was so much agitated that the patient complained, and moved her whole body, with an expression of intense suffering on her face. M. B. magnetized her and put her to a quiet repose. Wherever he carried his hands, the pain was taken away as by charm.

Such are the most interesting particulars of this morning's sitting—all which, as I said, was witnessed by Drs. Lewis, Doane and Kimball, and Mrs. L., the somnambule's friend. The patient was awaked at about 12 o'clock. Being asked how long she had been sleeping, she answered that she had been resting twelve or fifteen minutes at the longest. She had not the least recollection of what she had said or suffered during the operation.

CHARLES POYEN.

Boston, March 29, 1836.

BOSTON MEDICAL AND SURGICAL JOURNAL.

BOSTON, APRIL 6, 1836.

A MANUAL OF MIDWIFERY.*

If ever an author exerted physical strength, to say nothing of mental effort, to manufacture a book, Michael Ryan, M.D. member of more learned societies than many other savans on the globe, is the man. In order to make a plain subject as obscure as possible, he possesses the happy tact, with little exertion, for accomplishing whatever he undertakes in that way. To begin—a new nomenclature is introduced, more difficult to pronounce than the vernacular language of an aboriginal tribe on the Withlachcooche, who used seven trisyllables to express the number two. The book is an American reprint, well executed—having 520 pages, octavo—and purports to have been published at Burlington. Chapter I. is entitled Gynæcotomy, or History of Women. Next follows Gynæcophysiology, which is divided into something worse, viz. Parthenosology, or Diseases of Nubility—Encyonosology—Lochionosology—and Paidonosology! Not to be thought wanting, however, in the coinage of elegant and expressive terms, this voracious areopagite, instead of using the homely and well understood name of Cæsarean operation, introduces in its stead the euphonious word Gastrohysterotomia—and so on, through oceans of equally incomprehensible scholastic jargon. Before leaving this modern Babel, we cannot resist a provoking inclination to copy the newest technic for instrumental parturition, viz. Organikotocia—to which may be appended Chiragotocia, should the labor, by any accident, necessarily terminate manually.

When science comes to this sad pass, and common sense is driven

* A Manual of Midwifery, or Compendium of Gynæcology and Paidonosology, comprising a new Nomenclature of Obstetrical Medicine, with a concise account of the Symptoms and Treatment of the most important Diseases of Women and Children, and the management of the various forms of Parturition. By Michael Ryan, M.D. &c. &c. First American, from the third London Edition. Burlington: Smith & Harrington. 1835.

from the threshold by such a blast of ram's horns, rebellion is certainly justifiable. For the sake of the proprietors, we hope they will get the cost of the edition : but when they undertake the introduction of another foreign volume on a similar subject, they should first ascertain whether it is worth the expense. With regard to other parts of the book, there are in some places faint gleams of light. But it shall be looked into again.

INFLAMMATION OF THE LUNGS.

PHYSICIANS remark that inflammatory affections of the lungs are now quite rife in most of the New England States. The mortality among children, from this cause, has been a frequent subject of conversation. There seems to have been nothing very peculiar in the character of the inflammation of the mucous membrane, which has not been before observed ; yet the treatment, from some unexplained cause, has been less successful than in past times. Antimonials, on which much reliance is placed by most practitioners, seem to induce a sudden debility, without materially changing the aspect of the disease. With adults, however, the general mode of treatment has been more successful. If some of our correspondents will favor the Journal with their views upon this highly important topic, and detail what they consider the best plan of treatment in the present condition of the atmosphere, based upon experience in individual cases, they will essentially contribute to the usefulness of those who are devoted to the physical welfare of mankind.

CHARLATANISM EXTRAORDINARY.

THOSE at a distance from this great northern focus of empiricism, can have but a faint idea of the tremendous sway of the Emperor of Quacks, who is now reigning with supreme authority over the ignorant and vulgar, in this literary emporium. With deep humiliation we are compelled to acknowledge that men of the highest professional skill, distinguished for their attainments in the sciences, are neglected, and the advice and prescriptions sought of an arch, gray-headed mountebank—a scape grace of another country, who *condescends* to dupe the poor and miserable out of that which is needed for bread. To a forbidding haughtiness of carriage, is superadded such intolerable hypocrisy, that it is surprisingly strange even the blind do not discover the foulness of his character. But this constitutes the charm : the worse they are treated, the more ardent and devoted are his grossly abused subjects.

A perfect infatuation characterizes a certain class of unfortunates, who raise money, at the expense of those equally gullible, though less dependent, to pay a rapacious, impudent knave for imposing upon them. We can only deplore what cannot be controlled by direct appeals to common sense. But the furor cannot last much longer. When the heartless, calculating villain, who fares sumptuously on the guineas which are wrung from the hard earnings of honest poverty, leaves this depot of his mystical operations—which he will do—and laughs at the calamity he has occasioned, a troop of misguided patients must perceive with their mind's eye—but not by their optical apparatus—how much they have been cheated. We are taking special care to collect such a mass of facts for future promulgation, that the United States will be too small a theatre for the further successful filchings of an unhung scoundrel. When the grand jury begin their survey of the premises, it will be proper to

commence the history of an unprecedented system of surgical quackery, which for boldness, recklessness and sinfulness, is unparalleled in the annals of this fair region.

Fairfield Medical Institution.—Some changes appear to have been recently made in the board of Faculty at the Western Medical School in the State of New York. Dr. Mussey, of Dartmouth College, has been appointed Professor of Surgery and Obstetrics; but as the lecture terms at the two Colleges begin at different periods, he will not vacate his chair at Hanover. This gentleman will, therefore, officiate at both places—the duties of the one not being incompatible with a strict devotion to the interests of the other.

Secondary Syphilis.—Dr. Wallace, of the Jervis Street Hospital, Dublin, mentions a case of this kind, which was contracted by a young woman 18 years of age, from a child which she *dry-nursed*. It is generally known that *wet* nurses will contract the disease from suckling infants laboring under syphilis; but this, and other cases which might be referred to, prove that a *dry* nurse may also, by contact with such a child, become diseased. In such cases, it is the matter of secondary sores which propagates the disease.

Carcinoma of the Tongue.—A case of cancer of the tongue in a negress, successfully treated with the ligature, is recorded in the last No. of the American Journal, by Dr. Donnellan, of Donaldsville, La. The diseased portion removed constituted a considerable segment of the right side and tip of the organ. The vacuity perfectly cicatrized, and articulation was but slightly impaired.

Ulcerated Surfaces.—The patient had lost—says Dr. Wallace, in his clinical remarks on a hospital case—from sloughing and ulceration, consequent on an injury, a large portion of the integuments on the inner surface of his thigh; and an extensive ulcer remained, which he could not get healed. He says he had applied to many persons, and had tried in vain all the ordinary applications and methods. When he was admitted, the ulcer was not less than eight inches long and three wide; and the skin surrounding it was very indolent, or callous. You see it is not now more than five inches long, and in some parts scarcely half an inch wide, and the surrounding integuments are much softer and more natural. How has this great improvement been so rapidly produced? You have seen the treatment; he has been kept in bed, the surface of the granulations has been dressed with water-dressings—that is, lint dipped in tepid water has been daily applied to the sore, and then covered by oiled silk; and the skin surrounding the sore has been, to the extent of an inch, several times rubbed with the solid nitrate of silver, previously dipped in water. This application, you see, causes the separation of the cuticle, and a temporary exhalation, or sweating, from the surface of the cutis.

Medical Miscellany.—The smallpox is said to be making melancholy havoc in Marlboro' district, S. C. There were twenty-two cases on the 22d.—Marshall Edson, of Greenwich, Mass. on the authority of the Barre Gazette, vomited, or rather had a black snake, 18 inches long,

coaxed from his stomach, on the 18th, by the odor of a pan of milk.—Samuel Dubois, aged 104 years, died at Woodstock, N. Y. on the 19th; and Henry Fast, aged 101, at Esopers, March 2d.—A little pamphlet of eleven pages has come to hand from Cincinnati, all about how one *Vindex*, of that city, wrote, through an amanuensis, a midshipman, certain annoying things in the Whig, at which another *Æsculapian* took fire, and is about to annihilate his adversary. How the Ohio doctors disagree.—Dr. Bedford's excellent introductory address to a course of lectures delivered in Clinton Hall, New York, came at the eleventh hour: it should have been here two months ago, to have served the interest of the profession. Extracts may be expected hereafter.—The Western Journal of the Med. and Physical Sciences has had nine different publishers, since 1827.—Dr. McDowell has been presented with a beautiful silver vase, by his students. This is the anatomical Hercules, whom half the little great men of four or five medical colleges were determined to strangle in his infancy! His character and acquirements will be respected by posterity when their names are lost in the mutations of revolving time.—It has been computed that the 749 medical students attending public lectures the past winter, at Philadelphia, put into circulation \$399,600.—The College in the city of New York had only 188 matriculated at the same time. At this rate, another year, the corporation will have rooms to let.

DIED—At Smithfield, Johnson Co. Va., Dr. John Lee Haywood, formerly of Raleigh, 32.—In Roxbury, Ms. Dr. Abijah Draper, aged 60.—At Walworth, N. Y. Dr. Lewis McLowthe, aged 76.—Dr. J. P. Hopkins, Philadelphia.

Whole number of deaths in Boston for the week ending April 2, 22. Males, 16—Females, 6.

Of apoplexy, 1—old age, 1—infantile, 3—insane, 1—consumption, 3—measles, 1—accidental, 1— inflammation of the bowels, 1—lung fever, 2—intemperance, 3—dropsy, 1—convulsions, 1—typhous fever, 1. Stillborn, 2.

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March 9

HENRY A. DEWAR, M.D. M.M.S.S.

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